

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Listing of Claims

1 - 15. (Canceled)

16. (New) A stemming apparatus including:

a member,

a propellant charge, and

an initiator for igniting said second propellant charge which then acts on said member in a predetermined direction produced by ignition of said first propellant charge.

17. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 16, wherein:

said member is driven by the ignited propellant charge in the predetermined direction.

18. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 16, wherein:

said member includes a tapered leading end or formation on a side which faces in the predetermined direction.

19. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 17, wherein:

said member includes a tapered leading end or formation on a side which faces in the predetermined direction.

20. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein:

said member is conically shaped on said tapered leading end.

21. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 19, wherein:

said member is conically shaped on said tapered leading end.

22. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 18, wherein:
said member is constructed so that it is capable of flaring outwardly when moved in a direction which is opposite to the predetermined direction.

23. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 20, wherein:
said member is constructed so that it is capable of flaring outwardly when moved in a direction which is opposite to the predetermined direction.

24. (New) the stemming apparatus according to claim 16, wherein:
said member is shaped so that a gas generated force is produced by said ignited propellant in a direction which is opposite to the predetermined direction.

25. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 24, wherein:
said member includes a recessed formation which contains said propellant charge.

26. (New) The stemming apparatus according to claim 16, further including:
control means for controlling the firing of said initiator, said control means including an energy source and a timer for applying energy from the energy source to said initiator at a predetermined time.

27. (New) A method of stemming including the steps of:
placing stemming material in a hole over a cartridge which includes a first propellant charge;
positioning at least one member on the stemming material
locating a second propellant charge on or in the member; and
igniting the second propellant charge at a predetermined time relative to the time at which the first propellant charge is initiated.

28. (New) The method according to claim 27, wherein:
a short time interval exists between the time at which the second propellant charge is ignited and the time at which the first propellant charge is initiated.

29. (New) The method according to claim 28, wherein:
the first propellant charge is initiated substantially at the same time as the second propellant charge is ignited.

30. (New) The method according to claim 27, wherein:
the member is between the stemming material and the second propellant charge.

31. (New) The method according to claim 28, wherein:
the member is between the stemming material and the second propellant charge.

32. (New) The method according to claim 29, wherein:
the member is between the stemming material and the second propellant charge.

33. (New) The method according to claim 30, wherein:
the second propellant charge is used to drive the member in a direction towards the cartridge.

34. (New) The method according to claim 27, wherein:
the second propellant charge is between the stemming material and the member.

35. (New) The method according to claim 28, wherein:

the second propellant charge is between the stemming material and the member.

36. (New) The method according to claim 29, wherein:

the second propellant charge is between the stemming material and the member.

37. (New) The method according to claim 34, wherein:

the second propellant charge is used to produce a gas generated force which is directed towards the cartridge.